Global Training for Development USAID/E&E

Diagnostic Review of Exit Questionnaire Data
(1997-2002)

REGIONAL SUMMARY
(Central Asia, Caucasus, and WNIS)

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INTRODUCTION

The Global Training for Development (GTD) task order for the countries in Eurasia covered the period from March 1997 to August 2002. The Academy for Education Development implemented GTD/EE training activities in eleven countries and three regions: the <u>Caucasus</u> (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia); the <u>Western Newly Independent States</u> (Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus); and <u>Central Asia Republics</u> (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan).

Under GTD, close to 1,950 training programs were arranged in the US, in-country, and third countries for more than 46,000 participants. The evaluation of these programs was achieved through the information collected in the exit questionnaires administered to the participants at the end of each training event.

This review comprises three individual regional reports and a summary report of exit questionnaire data for the periods of CY1997-98, CY1999, CY2000, and CY2001-2002. The individual reports present evaluation data disaggregated by training location for each of the three regions in Eurasia where GTD activities were implemented. The summary report presents evaluation data from the three regional reviews also by location of training and reporting periods.

Purpose

The objective of this review is twofold:

- To provide home- and field-office staff with a comprehensive summary of the training evaluation data by reporting years and training venues. Project staff will be able to compare the data of the four periods and use it appropriately for continued improvement of training program development, design, and implementation.

- To provide a general review of key components of the training, assess its effectiveness, highlight areas that have shown improvement, and point out aspects that require greater attention.

Methodology

Six separate sections of the exit questionnaire were reviewed and compared: orientation, logistics, interpretation, content, utility/applicability of training, and overall assessment. Each section contains several questions, which were tabulated together, and the results reported represent the average percentage of all the questions in the respective section. The three questions pertaining to the usefulness, relevance, and utility of training, as well as the two questions dealing with overall assessment—all of which are included in the section of the questionnaire on content—were reviewed separately in order to assess participant satisfaction in only these areas. The table on page 3 indicates the overall regional ratings in participant satisfaction in each section of the questionnaire by training location and reporting period.

The review sample is based on the number of programs with exit questionnaires administered, as well as the number of participant who submitted exit questionnaires. The statistical section provides the number of programs conducted under each venue, the number of programs that had exit questionnaires administered, the number of participants trained, and the number of participants reflected in the review sample. Statistics for each of these areas are presented on pages 10-12.

The Exit Questionnaire

The exit questionnaire used to assess participant satisfaction in training was developed for the Global Training for Development project in collaboration with USAID/E&E training staff. The questionnaire contains a comprehensive set of questions in key areas of training: orientation, logistics, content, and utility of training in the workplace. It is structured to provide participants with a range of choices for each question useful in assessing their degree of satisfaction with the training program. The questionnaire also addresses the results-oriented approach to training emphasized under GTD by allowing participants to assess if the program was relevant to their work, and whether they will use and apply their new skills in their organizations.

Below is an explanation of each section of the exit questionnaire:

Orientation
The questions in this section inquire whether participants received orientation prior to the beginning and at the beginning of the program, the degree of involvement they had in planning their training, and how well the orientation lectures and materials prepared them for the program. The evaluation ratings for these two different sets of questions—orientation received and satisfaction with orientation—were grouped and analyzed separately. The statistical chart presented for each venue includes the breakdown of these questions.

Logistics
These questions address participant satisfaction in areas such as transportation, timeliness of allowance payment, medical insurance, training facilities, and housing.

Interpretation
In this section, participants report whether or not an interpreter was provided, and are asked to rate the language and technical skills of the interpreter(s). Participants also have the opportunity to judge the level of difficulty encountered in the interpretation or translation of activities such as classroom lectures and discussions, reading assignments, site visits, and social events.

Program Content
This section contains three different sets of questions, which were separated for the statistical analysis. One set of questions deals with the actual content of the training program and asks participants to rate the training ability and technical expertise of the instructors, the balance between theory and practice, the instructional methods, group discussions, site visits, efforts in identifying ways to apply training, and opportunities to develop professional linkages. Another set of questions addresses the relevance, usefulness, and applicability of training in the workplace, and the third set asks participants to provide an overall assessment of the training. The statistical chart presented for each venue includes the breakdown of these questions.

Summary of Satisfaction Rate

The table below presents the average rates in participant satisfaction for each section of the questionnaire. The percentages for each venue and reporting year represent the aggregate results from the three regions.

Criteria	US based (CAR-Caucasus-WNIS)				In-Country (CAR-Caucasus-WNIS)				Third Country (CAR-Caucasus-WNIS)			
	1997-98	**1999**	**2000**	**2001-02**	**1997-98**	**1999**	**2000**	**2001-02**	**1997-98**	**1999**	**2000**	**2001-02**
Orientation Received[1]	91%	87%	88%	96%	Not analyzed (Not a component of in-country training)				87%	75%	82%	86%
Satisfaction rate[2]	88%	87%	88%	89%					86%	86%	86%	90%
Logistics Satisfaction rate	95%	95%	95%	97%	96%	97%	97%	98%	95%	96%	97%	97%
Interpretation Satisfaction rate	96%	94%	96%	97%	93%	89%	93%	94%	96%	96%	95%	94%
Content Satisfaction rate	91%	90%	92%	95%	89%	90%	91%	90%	91%	91%	90%	91%
Utility/Applicability[3] Agreement rate	97%	98%	98%	98%	93%	94%	96%	95%	97%	97%	96%	95%
Overall Assessment[4] Positive	94%	96%	97%	96%	88%	87%	92%	90%	94%	95%	93%	95%

US-based		In-country		Third country	
1997-98	N = 725	1997-98	N = 3,107	1997-98	N = 460
1999	N = 514	1999	N = 5,484	1999	N = 597
2000	N = 526	2000	N = 7,077	2000	N = 829
2001-02	N = 177	2001-02	N = 3,906	2001-02	N = 959

[1] Includes 4 questions:
 -Did you receive orientation prior to the beginning of your program?
 -Did you receive orientation at the beginning of your program?
 -Were the training objectives discussed with you?
 -Were you actively involved in planning your training?

[2] Includes 3 questions:
 -How well did the orientation prior to the training prepare you?
 -How well did the orientation at the beginning of the training prepare you?
 -On a scale of 1-5, how well prepared were you for this program?

[3] Includes 3 questions:
 -The program was useful
 -The program was relevant to my work
 -I will be able to apply what I learned in my work

[4] Includes 2 questions:
 -Overall, how would you assess training experience?
 -Would you describe your training experience as positive?

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Overall Summary

Across the regions, venues, and reporting periods, participants expressed a high level of satisfaction in all key areas of training as evidenced by their strong positive assessments, above 90% in all but a few instances. In most areas of training, the 2001-02 ratings for US- and third-country training are above 90% and show improvement. While the ratings for in-country training indicate a slight decline in 2001-02, the four-year average is above 89% in all areas of in-country training. (Refer to the table on the previous page for a four-year comparison of the regional ratings by training venue and reporting period).

Below are observations and explanations based on the overall regional findings for each area of training:

US training. The satisfaction rate for US training remained consistently high in the four reporting periods, above 90% in most areas and reaching 97%-98% in several instances. Moreover, the ratings for the 2001-02 period either improved or remained at the high levels recorded in the previous years. The highest scores for US training are in utility/applicability of training with a four-year regional average of 98%.

In-country training. The ratings for in-country training are above 90% in most areas. While the scores in 2001-02 declined somewhat from the improvement recorded in 2000, the regional four-year average in all areas of training is above 89%. The highest scores are in logistics with a four-year regional average of 97% followed by utility/applicability of training with a four-year average of 94.5%.

Third-country training. The overall satisfaction rates for third-country training are also high, above 90% in most areas. The highest ratings are in applicability/utility of training with a four-year average of 96%. The scores for orientation remained at 86% the first three years and improved to 90% in 2001-02. The number of participants who reported having received orientation declined significantly in 1999 to 75%, but improved steadily the following two years reaching 86% in 2001-02.

Shift in Training Venues

In 1999 and 2000, there was a substantial increase in in-country and third-country training with a decrease in US-based training, which was used strategically whenever it was deemed essential to achieve the technical objectives of the program. While the number of in-country participants decreased substantially in 2001-02, it remained considerably higher than the number of US and third-country participants.

The chart on the next page illustrates the number of participants who attended in-country training in relation to those who attended US and third-country training.

**Distribution of GTD Participants
by training venues and contract year**
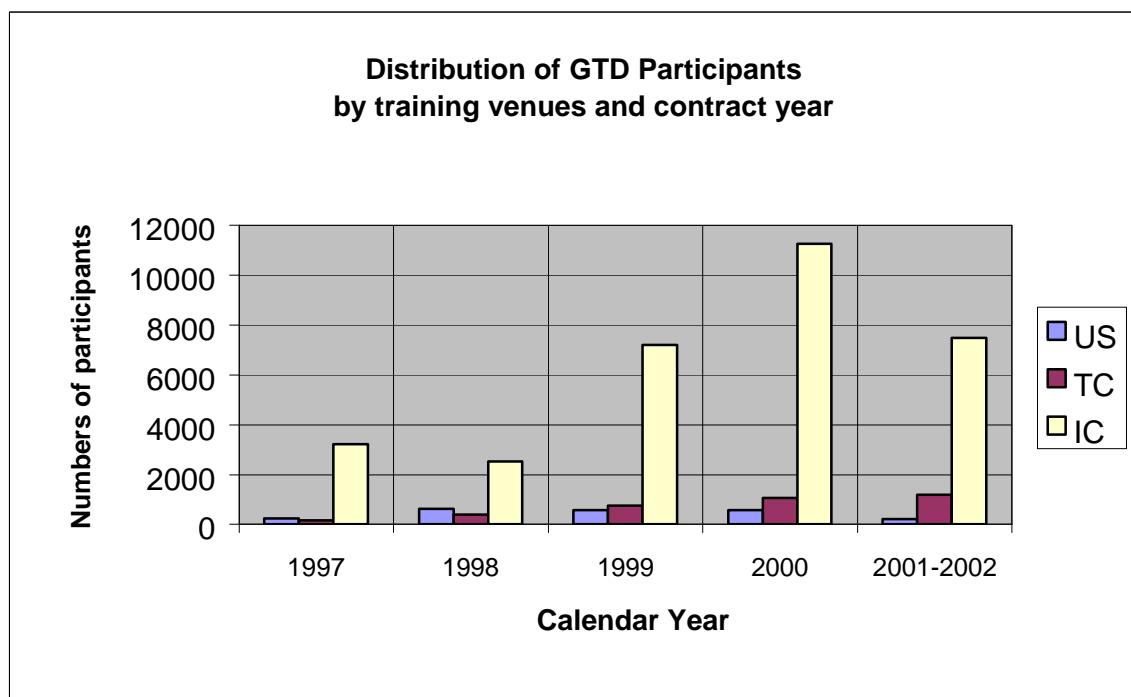
Effectiveness of Training Designs

This shift in training venues resulted in new and innovative training designs, such as integrating US, in-country, and third-country programs; developing series or repeat programs that involved the same participants and served to reinforce newly acquired skills and knowledge; and arranging regional programs that brought together participants from several countries and proved to be effective tools for coordinating solutions to common problems.

This combination of training venues was an effective training approach, which allowed participants to examine a variety of models at various degrees of development. For instance, integrating US and in-country training gave participants the opportunity to compare and contrast local and Western practices. Combining a US component with training in Eastern Europe allowed participants to examine various ways of addressing a specific issue in countries at different stages of transition from a centralized system to a free market and democratic society. Moreover, a rich and wide variety of training methodologies, approaches, and procedures were developed or refined to respond to the needs of the ever increasing number of in-country and third-country participants.

The high satisfaction rates being reported in all components of the training programs attest to the effectiveness of the training designs and innovations implemented. These ratings also demonstrate that all three venues—or combinations of venues—were equally effective and appropriately selected to meet the objectives of the specific training program and the professional needs and interests of the participants. (See page 8 for an expanded description of the successful training models and approaches implemented under GTD).

Analysis by Exit Questionnaire Categories

Below are observations and explanations of key findings for each section of the exit questionnaire. Refer to the individual regional reports for a comparison and in-depth analysis of evaluation findings for each region by location of training.

Orientation
For US-based training, an average of 90.5% of participants in the four years reported having received orientation prior to and at the beginning of the program. The average satisfaction rate with the various components of US orientation is 88%. For third-country training, the number of participants who reported having received orientation decreased in 1999 from 87% to 75%, but increased considerably the following two years reaching 86% in 2001-02. The satisfaction rate, however, remained at 86% in the first three years and improved to 90% in the last year. Pre-departure orientation is not conducted for IC programs, thus this area was not analyzed for this venue.

Several characteristics pertaining to the design of the training programs explain the decline in 1999 in the number of third-country participants who received orientation. In the Caucasus, for instance, in-country programs were sometimes used as lead-ins to third-country programs, thus, the orientation that participants received in these cases dealt mainly with logistical arrangements rather than program related issues, such as objectives and training content, as these had been discussed during the in-country program. In 1999, also in the Caucasus, several third-country programs were conferences that participants had identified and applied to USAID for sponsorship. Because the participants were acquainted with the content of the conferences, the orientation in these cases also focused primarily on logistical arrangements. In Central Asia, numerous regional programs were implemented, and an orientation was not provided for participants who traveled within the Central Asian republics. In WNIS, most of the participants selected in the earlier years were high-level officials who either did not attend orientation or had experience traveling outside Ukraine and, therefore, did not require the level of detailed pre-departure guidance that participants in the latter years did.

The improvement recorded in participant satisfaction in orientation is the result of a concerted effort to ensure that orientation activities responded to the changing needs of the participants. WNIS, for instance, involved training alumni in the orientation. This approach allowed the trainees to benefit from the experience of previous participants, enhanced the understanding of the trainees of what to expect from their US or third country experience, and encouraged the trainees to be more critical and demanding of the training providers and of themselves as participants. The alumni conferences, organized as part of orientation, provided a unique forum and gave trainees an excellent opportunity to clarify training objectives and discuss individual expectations. This approach also resulted in an increased number of participants who attended orientation in the latter years.

Logistics
Participant satisfaction with the various aspects of logistics such as housing, transportation, timeliness of allowance payments, medical insurance, and the quality of training facilities is an average of above 95% in the three venues and reporting years.

Interpretation

Interpretation services such as the language skills/technical knowledge of the interpreters and the quality of translated materials received an average of 95.5% satisfaction rate for US and third-country training. In most instances, in-country training is conducted by native speakers, thus, interpretation is not necessary. The satisfaction rate for those who received in-country interpretation, improved during the last three years reaching 94% in 2001-02.

Content

The regional four-year average for the various components of training content, such as the training ability/technical expertise of the instructors, site visits, instructional methods, and the extent to which objectives were met, is above 90% in the three venues. This high assessment in the content area remained constant across the reporting periods and venues.

During the latter years of GTD, the integrated approach to program design was used more extensively. Training events included several components, such as an initial in-country workshop or conference, followed by a third-country or US-based program, and a final in-country conference, all directed at achieving the same objectives. This approach also provided participants with additional support following their training. The final in-country conference allowed them to report to their colleagues and receive feedback from them on components of their action plans that they were able to implement.

Another factor that accounts for the strong positive responses in the content area is the competitive process followed for selecting training providers. Home- and field-office staff conduct comprehensive research to identify known and new training providers who specialize in the topic areas identified for training, were well versed in the conditions and situation of their respective countries, and had the expertise to respond to the unique needs and demands of USAID-sponsored training.

Utility\Applicability

The relevance, utility, and applicability of training to the workplace is the section that received the highest marks in all three venues with a four-year average of 98% for US training; 94.5% for IC training; and 96% for TC. Two important factors account for these high results:

a) The participants were carefully selected for training, i.e., participants for whom the training was relevant and were in a position to apply their new skills in the workplace and effect change in their organizations.

b) Activities that enhanced the ability of the participants to identify ways of applying the training in their work were implemented successfully. Either through action plans, group discussions, or individual presentations, participants identified potential areas in which they could effect change in their work and communities. These activities received between 85% and 100% satisfaction rate in the individual regional reviews.

Overall Assessment

The number of participants who expressed their enthusiasm for the training and judged their training experience as positive was an average of 95% for US-based and third-country training, and 89% for in-country training.

Successful Training Approaches, Models, and Practices

The training models described below were initiated or refined throughout the life of GTD to respond to two key situations: the increasing number of in-country and third-country participants and their changing training and professional needs.

Using a combination of training venues based on the specific objectives of the program and needs of the participants, such as:

- Integrating US-based and in-country components to allow participants to compare and contrast local and Western models and practices.

- Programs conducted in Eastern and Central Europe with a US or in-country component for comparative value and to foster linkages.

- In-country programs combined with training in Eastern Europe and the US to allow participants to examine various levels of development.

Incorporating a Training of Trainers component
By including a strong TOT component in the training design, training served not only to impart knowledge, but also develop a cadre of local professionals with training skills.

Combining participants from a cross section of stakeholders
Whether trainees were selected from different levels within the same organization or from different organizations working on a specific issue, this approach brought together critical stakeholders who had an interest in ensuring that the intended results of the training were realized.

Conducting in-country repeat or series programs over time to reach a wide audience
By repeating the same training or offering a series of connected training events, a larger number of participants were able to attend the training. This type of training is cost-effective and lends itself to local capacity development whenever local institutions are incorporated in the design to become future training providers.

Conducting regional needs assessment
Training needs were identified at the sector, country, and regional levels. Assessing needs regionally helped to identify areas in which common issues could be most effectively addressed through programs that included participants from more than one country.

Acquiring practical experience through study tours
This approach provided participants with practical, hands-on experiences with different work situations and models, as well as expanded opportunities for linkages and networking.

Using technical assistance contractors to design and deliver training
Because a significant amount of training in the E&E region was integrated with technical assistance, the contractors were vital in the design and implementation of training events. This approach also allowed participants to be involved in the activities implemented by the technical

assistance contractors, which increased the likelihood that the skills acquired during training would be applied in the workplace.

Partnering local institutions with international organizations
This approach helped to strengthen the capacity of local institutions to design and deliver training and, over time, to provide training on their own.

Providing unprogrammed funds for follow-on
In Central Asia, USAID/CAR set aside funds to be used for lectures, workshops, and conferences, or to develop program ideas based on opportunities that arose. In some cases, these activities were the result of trainee proposals; in other cases, they took advantage of experts traveling in the region who could be engaged to speak to a group. Some events were organized around topics that had become timely as a result of recent events. These activities were viewed positively by trainees and USAID and provided different venues for networking and updating trainee knowledge.

Building expertise with long-term academic study
Participation in graduate study strengthened participants' capacity to initiate and lead reform in the energy, economic restructuring, and public health sector areas.

STATISTICS

The Review Sample

US-Based Training

Participants
Number of US-based participants trained and number represented in the review sample:

	1997-1998	1999	2000	2001-02
Number of participants who completed US-based training	851	565	557	226
Number of US participants who submitted exit questionnaires	725	514	526	177
Percentage of participants represented in the review sample	85%	91%	94%	78%

Training Programs
Number of US programs implemented and number represented in the review sample:

	1997-98	1999	2000	2001-02
Number of US programs implemented	77	60	72	35
Number of US programs with exit questionnaires administered *	65	52	62	29
Number of US programs represented in the review sample	64**	52	61**	28**
Percentage of US programs represented in the review sample	98%	100%	98%	97%

* Programs such as conferences, seminars, internships, normally, do not have exit questionnaires administered.

** The training provider did not submit the questionnaires for one program.

The Review Sample

In-Country Training

Participants
Number of in-country participants trained and number represented in the review sample:

	1997-98	1999	2000	2001-02
Number of participants who completed in-country training	5,734	7,206	11,264	7,484
Number of in-country participants who submitted exit questionnaires	3,107	5,484	7,077	3,906
Percentage of in-country participants represented in the review sample	54%	76%	63%	52%

Training Programs
Number of in-country programs implemented and number represented in the review sample:

	1997-98	1999	2000	2001-02
Number of IC programs implemented	173	244	371	210
Number of IC programs with exit questionnaires administered *	142	227	283	130
No. of IC programs represented in the review sample	116**	217**	283	130
Percentage of IC programs represented in the review sample	82%	96%	100%	100%

*Programs such as conferences, seminars, internships, normally, do not have exit questionnaires administered.

** Several exit questionnaires from Central Asia were lost en route to Almaty; thus the lower number of programs represented in the sample.

The Review Sample

Third-Country Training

Participants
Number of third-country participants trained and number represented in the review sample:

	1997-98	**1999**	**2000**	**2001-02**
Number of TC participants who completed third-country training	551	750	1,049	1,198
Number of TC participants who submitted exit questionnaires	460	597	829	959
Percentage of participants represented in the review sample	83%	80%	79%	80%

Training Programs
Number of in-country programs implemented and number represented in the review sample:

	1997-98	**1999**	**2000**	**2001-02**
Number of TC programs implemented	60	94	116	115
Number of TC programs with exit questionnaires administered *	54	79	106	106
Number of TC programs represented in the review sample	49**	79	103**	106
Percentage of TC programs represented in the review sample	91%	100%	97%	100%

    *Programs such as conferences, seminars, internships, normally, do not have
      exit questionnaires administered.

    ** The exit questionnaires for five '97-98 programs and three 2000 programs
      were lost; thus, the lower number of programs represented in the review sample.